

GREETING CARD WITH HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to greeting cards and to healthcare. In particular, the present invention relates to greeting cards that provide healthcare information to both the recipient and the giver of the card.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Greeting cards are articles of manufacture that are generally made of card stock or other paper products having weights and thicknesses greater than ordinary stationery, and they are usually imprinted with writings and/or graphics suitable to the purpose or occasion for which they are being given. Greeting cards are given for many different reasons, and usually in connection with various significant occasions in people's lives including birthdays, graduations, weddings, the birth of a child, or promotions. Greeting cards are also given for more somber reasons, for example, "get well" cards are given to people that have suffered a serious illness, and "sympathy" cards are given to people that have experienced a loss of a family member. Overall, greeting cards provide a convenient means for a person to convey a wide variety of messages to the recipient of the card—ranging from the humorous to the most serious.

[0003] It is known in the prior art that greeting cards are made in many different styles including postcard type cards to multiple page cards. It is also known in the prior art that greeting cards can have detachable sheets, for example, the patent issued to Sinnott et al. U.S. Pat. No. 4,826,211, teaches a multiple sheet greeting card that has a detachably attached sheet, and the patent issued to Gaines U.S. Pat. No. 5,437,478, teaches a greeting card with a detachable receipt. Furthermore, it is also known in the prior art that greeting cards can contain health-related information. For example, see the patent to Harris U.S. Pat. No. 5,923,556, for a greeting card and method for imprinting a portion of a card giver's electrocardiogram wave on a greeting card, and, also see, the patent to Seabrook U.S. Pat. No. 5,954,369, which teaches a greeting card that contains a pocket for holding a medical "test kit," and which may contain information regarding medical checkups that maybe appropriate for the card recipient based on the card recipient's age. It is also well known that health-related information is available from a variety of sources and for a variety of reasons. For example, the United States Navy has its Virtual Navy Hospital website at <http://www.vnh.org>. This website provides health-related information covering a wide range of medical conditions through the use of separate healthcare provider and patient specific web-links.

[0004] Because of the dramatic progress that has been achieved throughout the field of medicine, including in the areas of medical technology, treatment, and healthcare, more and more people are surviving health conditions that were previously life ending. This, among other causes, has contributed to the increase in the life expectancy and the average age of our population. To pay for this progress and technology, healthcare costs have risen to ever higher levels, which is precluding many Americans from being able to afford personal medical insurance, and which is increasingly forcing more and more employers away from providing medical

coverage to their employees. Currently, over 40 million Americans have no medical insurance, and for those that do, many have insufficient insurance coverage, (e.g., the insured's medical insurance does not provide coverage for the treatment or the level of care required by the insured or the insured's family, or the insured is forced to pay for other unaffordable out-of-pocket costs, including costs associated with third party provided assisted-living services, or with nursing home care).

[0005] Therefore, a growing number of people are becoming caregivers, and are providing home healthcare for their friends or relatives who are recovering from illnesses, who are chronically ill, or who are elderly and not completely able to care for themselves. Consequently, it would be particularly useful to be able to convey health-related information in a format that focuses on the information needs of the individuals receiving the information, such as a chronically ill family member and that family member's caregiver, and it would be even more useful if multiple needs could be met through a common information delivery system like a greeting card. However, even though greeting cards come in a wide variety of styles, greeting cards that contain separate giver and recipient health-related and/or healthcare-related information are not known in the prior art.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] According to its major aspects and briefly recited, the present invention is a greeting card that is designed to satisfy the aforementioned needs to deliver healthcare-related information, while allowing the information to be tailored to the information needs and sensitivities of the card giver and the card recipient. Preferably, the greeting cards of the present invention would contain health and healthcare-related information focused on a specific medical condition, health issue, illness, or disease. For example, in one preferred embodiment, the hepatitis C greeting cards would provide two information packets, one for the recipient and one for the card giver, and preferably, these information packets would be distinguishable by being appropriately labeled and/or possibly color-coded. In continuing this example, the recipient would be a person that has contracted hepatitis C, and the recipient's information packet would contain important information on the disease including, for example, foods and activities that should be avoided. The card giver, who, preferably, is also the card recipient's caregiver, (i.e., the person providing home healthcare to the card recipient), would be provided with an information packet that would not only contain information similar to that provided in the recipient's packet, but would also contain other content sensitive information—such as warning signs of depression, and what actions to take to prevent its occurrence or to care for it in the event that such depression develops. The caregiver's information packet may also contain information alerting the caregiver of warning signs associated with the progression of the illness or failure to follow dietary or other recommendations, and, based on these signs, what actions the caregiver may need to take.

[0007] The present invention is the combination of a greeting card and health-related information packets. The card recipient's information packet maybe permanently attached to the greeting card. Preferably, however, the greeting card has one or more pockets for holding the information